



A newsletter focused on environmental justice-related events and actions specifically affecting New Jersey.

<https://www.uufaithaction.org/blog>

EJTF ACTIVITIES

UUFANJ/EJTF Involved in Key Victory for NJ Environmental Education

A significant victory on a two-year effort was reached in the NJ Senate Education Committee on December 4, 2025. A bill supported by UU FaithAction NJ and a coalition of educators across NJ, Tammy Murphy, NJ Audubon, and The College of NJ (TCNJ), was passed out of the Senate Education Committee 5 to 0.

Michael Skelly, Policy Director for the Environmental Justice Task Force of UU FaithAction NJ presented testimony in front of the NJ Senate Education Committee on December 4, 2025 in favor of the bill (S4679) with recommendations for amendments on behalf of UU FaithAction NJ. The bill expands the NJ Commission on Environmental Education from 23 to 33 representative members and expands the Commission's scope of powers. Michael's testimony is on [p. 2](#).



Photo at left: Allison Mulch (left) Director of Environmental Education for NJ Audubon and Michael Skelly (right) Policy Director, Environmental Justice Task Force UU FaithAction, NJ at New Jersey Senate Education Committee Hearing on S4679 on December 4, 2025 (pictured above). Photos by Michael Skelly

Why it matters. This bill aims to create a more robust framework for environmental education in NJ, ensuring students and adults have the knowledge to tackle climate change and promote sustainability in their communities and throughout the State, building on existing efforts like the State's environmental education initiatives. Michael has been involved in the bill from its inception, helping to insure that it includes environmental justice representation on the Environmental Education Commission. The bill is moving through the NJ legislature; hopefully, it will be passed and signed this session.

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

EJTF Activities	1	- Land Management/ Agriculture/ Food	11
Public Hearings on NJ Learning Standards Revisions	3	- Climate Change	12
Future Events	4	- Drinking Water (other than lead)	13
Videos+ of Past Events	7	- Energy/Energy Efficiency	14
News Related to EJTF Issues	10	Other	14
- Electric Vehicles & Vehicle Emission Reduction	10	PJM-related Issues	15
- Renewable Resources	11	Moratorium Mondays	16

EJTF ACTIVITIES (Continued)

UU Faith Action Testimony at NJ Senate Education Committee Hearing on Bill S4679 re: NJ Commission on Environmental Education by Dr. Michael Skelly, Sr., December 4, 2025

"Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of Bill S4679 and its timely revisions to New Jersey's Commission on Environmental Education.

I am Dr. Michael Skelly, Policy Director with the Environmental Justice Task Force at Unitarian Universalist FaithAction NJ. I speak to you today from a faith perspective - which recognizes our deep interdependence with the web of all existence - and as a retired educational consultant and past President of the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education.

This bill is a powerful response to the urgency of our environmental challenges. It provides the essential infrastructure for effective environmental literacy across our state.

The core strength of the Bill is its recognition that environmental education requires diverse expertise. The expanded Commission wisely adds representatives from agriculture, public utilities, industry, cultural institutions, and - most critically - environmental justice organizations. These sectors bring essential, real-world insights, ensuring our educational policy is informed by the very fields where environmental challenges and solutions intersect.

New Jersey has been a leader in climate education, but leadership requires accountability and support.

The bill's shift to inventorying resources across State agencies AND tracking the actual implementation of education proves we are serious about this work. This provides the essential framework to deliver the clear guidance, professional development, and resources our dedicated teachers need to succeed.

As Unitarian Universalists and educators, we are called to action to build a just and sustainable world. This Bill is a necessary, powerful step toward that goal.

I urge this committee to support and adopt Bill S4679. Thank you."

Dr. Michael Skelly, Sr.
Policy Director, Environmental Justice Task Force
Unitarian Universalist FaithAction NJ

A copy of the amended bill that was unanimously approved by this committee is available here: <https://www.njleg.gov/bill-search/2024/S4679/bill-text?f=S5000&n=4679> R1.

NJDOE Public Hearings on

Draft Revisions to NJ Student Learning Standards

1/13/2026, 11:00 a.m., Blackwood, NJ - **In-person** (register by noon 1/8/2026)

1/28/2026, 6:00 p.m., Newark, NJ - **In-person** (register by noon 1/22/2026)

2/4/2026, 1:00 p.m., Trenton, NJ - **In-person** (register by noon 1/29/2026)

for Student Learning Standards on: Science

Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills (CLKS)

Computer Science, Innovation, & Society (CSIS) [formerly "Computer Science and Design Thinking"]

World Languages (WL)

Visual and Performing Arts (VPA)

NJ State law calls for the revision to the NJ Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) every five years by subject area on a revolving basis. **EJTF member Mike Skelly** has been very involved in ensuring that environmental justice, climate change and sustainability are included in the ongoing revisions of the NJSLS that address NJ's first-in-the-U.S. requirement for climate change to be taught across all grade levels and subjects. The NJ Department of Education (DOE) has issued draft revisions to the learning standards listed above, and are holding three public hearings on them, as shown above. Additional information about the hearings and links to register online to speak are available here:

https://www.nj.gov/education/sboe/meetings/testimony/NJSLS_Regional_Public_Hearings_Notice.pdf. **Written comments** about the draft revisions to the NJSLS can be submitted to

njslsreview@doe.nj.gov. Please contact the State Board Office at 609-376-9071 or

stateboardoffice@doe.nj.gov should you have questions. **Links to the draft revised**

standards documents are available here: <https://www.nj.gov/education/sboe/>. "Climate

change" is denoted in the documents by a symbol (🌱). **Presentations about the revised**

standards are available here:

- **Proposed Revisions to New Jersey Student Learning Standards:**

Science and Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

https://www.nj.gov/education/sboe/meetings/agenda/2025/November/public/5f6_NJSLS_CLKS_and_Science_presentation.pdf

- **Proposed Revisions to New Jersey Student Learning Standards:**

Computer Science, Innovation, and Society; World Languages;

and Visual and Performing Arts

https://www.nj.gov/education/sboe/meetings/agenda/2025/December/public/5e2_Item_E_presentation.pdf

CLIMATE SUPERFUND ACT - SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Scheduled for 1/8/2026, Trenton, NJ - **In-person**

UUFANJ/EJTF has been significantly involved in getting this legislation (S3545/A4696)

passed; check here for the Committee hearing schedule: [https://njleg.state.nj.us/committees/senate-](https://njleg.state.nj.us/committees/senate-committees/schedules?committee=SBA)

[committees/schedules?committee=SBA](https://njleg.state.nj.us/committees/senate-committees/schedules?committee=SBA). We hope that many people will come to the hearing to show support for the bill. Clergy have also taken a leading role (clergy letter is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc28n636>.) We just need one final push to get it over the edge! **PLEASE**

CONTINUE TO CALL Senate President Scutari and Assembly Speaker Coughlin to show support for the bill!

FUTURE EVENTS - Virtual, In-person, and Hybrid

EJTF members - also watch for email announcements of events with short lead times!

Others - send an email to uufaihactionejtf@gmail.com requesting to receive information about environmental issues and upcoming events.

JANUARY 2026						
(with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
<i>Sun.</i>	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Wed.</i>	<i>Thurs.</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Sat.</i>
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8 Climate Superfund Act Hearing Register to speak at NJDOE 1/13/2026 Public Hearing - by 12:00 p.m.	9 NJ Community Forestry Council - 10:00 a.m.	10
11 Jersey City, NJ Repair Cafe - 1:00 p.m.	12	13 NJDOE Public Hearing on Draft Revisions to NJ Student Learning Standards - 11:00 a.m.	14	15 Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) Conference - 7:30 a.m.	16 Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) Conference - 8:00 a.m.	17
18	19 Second Annual MLK March of Resistance - 12:00 p.m.	20	21 NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m.	22 "Harness Transactions to Cultivate Transformations" - 12:00 p.m. Register to speak at NJDOE 1/28/2026 Public Hearing - by 12:00 p.m.	23	24
25 East Brunswick, NJ Repair Cafe - 1:00 p.m.	26 Science Monday- "Watershed Management - All About Rain Gardens" - 6:30 p.m.	27 "People's Green Amendment Action Guide Launch!" - 6:30 p.m. "How Mobilizing Voters Can Make a Difference in 2026" - 7:00 p.m.	28 NJDOE Public Hearing on Draft Revisions to NJ Student Learning Standards - 6:00 p.m. "Green Sanctuary 2030 Celebration" - 7:00 p.m.	29 Register to speak at NJDOE 2/4/2026 Public Hearing on Draft Revisions to NJ Student Learning Standards - by 12:00 p.m.	30	31 NOFA-NJ Conference: - 9:00 a.m. Rutherford, NJ Repair Cafe - 11:30 a.m. "Good Grain" Film Screening - 7:30 p.m.

FUTURE EVENTS

NJ Community Forestry Council
1/9/2026, 10:00 a.m. - Hybrid
Jackson, NJ - In-person & Online

"The NJ Community Forestry Council (Council) to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is comprised of members appointed by the State Forester, with expertise or interest in trees, forestry, or tree or forest management, maintenance, or care. The Council

advises the State Forester, the Division of Parks and Forestry and the DEP.... in promoting, supporting and advancing healthy, safe and sustainable urban and community forests in New Jersey." The meeting agenda will deal with implementing the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act, the No Net Loss Reforestation Act, and issues concerning urban and community forestry and the forest and tree resources. Links to additional information, including how to join virtually, are available here: www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/forest/urbanandcommunity/njcommunityforestrycouncil.html.

Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) - 41st Annual Winter Conference

1/15/2026, 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (plus Happy Hour)

**1/16/2026, 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Ewing, NJ - In-person**

The Alliance for NJ Environmental Education (ANJEE) is presenting a two-day Environmental Education Conference. "As a proud Affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education, The Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) presents its 41st Annual Winter Conference, focusing on the powerful role of collaboration and networks in moving the field of environmental education forward." Conference Threads include: Conservation and Environmental Education; Connecting with Nature; Educating for a Changing Climate; and Building Leadership in Environmental Education. Additional information, including the agenda and the link to register (**for non-members: \$200 for 1/15/2026; \$200 for 1/16/2026; \$370 for both**), is available here: <https://anjee.org/schedule-and-workshops.html>.

**Second Annual MLK March of Resistance
1/19/2026, 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Newark, NJ - In-person**

Join a coalition of over 100 Local Essex County justice organizations to march and resist current policies with the People's Organization for Progress. This event is endorsed by an array of organizations **including UUFANJ**. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.uufaihaction.org/event/2nd-mlk-march-of-resistance/>.

**NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Virtual
1/21/2026, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

The NJ Clean Air Council (CAC) provides advice to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on air quality matters. The January meeting will be held virtually. Contact George Berdomas, 609-940-5654 (**George.Berdomas@dep.nj.gov**) regarding an invitation for the monthly meeting. Additional information is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/event/clean-air-council-meeting-20260121/>.

**"Harness Transactions to Cultivate Transformations" - Webinar
1/22/2026, 12:00 p.m.**

This webinar is sponsored by the American Forests' Tree Equity Coaching Network. "Join us for the seventh session of the Tree Equity Coaching Network with OUR Community Forestry [an Oregon nonprofit 'dedicated to fostering resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban forests for underserved and climate-vulnerable communities across Oregon']. We'll discuss how trees are intersectional and how advancing our work and partnerships beyond simple transactions, with intention to transform our relationships and communities, can drive intersectional benefits." The Tree Equity Coaching Network "is a community of practice for urban foresters, community advocates, city leaders and allied professionals to connect, learn, inspire and cultivate city commitments to advance Tree Equity." Additional information and registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/49fkuyuy>.

**Science Monday - "Watershed Management - All About Rain Gardens"
1/26/2026, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Lincroft, NJ - In-person**

This webinar is organized by the NJ Sierra Club Jersey Shore Group. "Join Dr. Christopher C. Obropta from the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program for an engaging presentation, 'All About Rain Gardens.' Learn how rain gardens help reduce flooding, improve water quality, and beautify communities by capturing and filtering stormwater naturally. Dr. Obropta will also share information about the Green Infrastructure Champions Program, which trains and supports local leaders, municipal staff, and residents in implementing green infrastructure projects throughout New Jersey." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00001M4pgLIAR>.

"People's Green Amendment Action Guide Launch!" - Webinar
1/27/2026, 6:30 p.m.

This webinar presented by "Green Amendments for the Generations" is specifically for states that are working to secure Green Amendments (like NJ). "Have you ever wished you had a toolkit to help guide your Green Amendment advocacy?... Well, look no further, because Green Amendments For The Generations' People's Action Guides are finally here! These two guides - one for states with Green Amendments and one for states working to secure them - were crafted especially for passionate people like you. We break down Green Amendments at every step of the way, from the concept of constitutional environmental rights, to the victories that have affirmed their legal strength, to education and outreach tips to build your own Green Amendment coalition." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://forthe generations.org/events/peoples-action-guide-launch-for-states-working-to-secure-a-green-amendment/>.

"How Mobilizing Voters Can Make a Difference in 2026" - Webinar
with Environmental Voter Project's Nathaniel Stinnett
1/27/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

In this webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action, "Join Nathaniel Stinnett of the Environmental Voter Project (EVP) for a sneak peek at their data for the 2026 midterm elections, and where EVP thinks climate voters (and the activists who mobilize them) could make a big difference in 2026." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y27t6h32>.

"Green Sanctuary 2030 Celebration"
- Webinar
1/28/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

This annual celebration of the UU Association's congregational climate justice program with Side with Love - Green Sanctuary 2030 (GS2030) - "is a time for our Active Green Sanctuary Teams to come together to share what they're working on. It's a fast-paced, inspirational review of all the good work our congregations are doing. Come to learn how UUs are transforming our congregations

through climate justice or share what your congregation is working on in your GS2030 ministry." Additional information and registration are available here: <https://secure.everyaction.com/jSTmhDMejUWqfH7i7GUPFw2>.

NOFA-NJ's 36th Annual Winter Conference: "Stories of Organic Matter"
1/31/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Asbury Park, NJ - In-person

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA-NJ) is holding its 36th Annual Winter Conference at the Berkeley Oceanfront Hotel in Asbury Park, NJ. The theme of this year's conference is "Stories of Organic Matter." "NOFA NJ has the responsibility - and the privilege - of championing the stories of our community, and we know that each of us has a story worth sharing. This year and next, our Annual Winter Conference will explore the stories within our community, highlighting the people and the passion behind the work we love. In collaboration with *The Moth*, we're making space and taking time to listen, learn, connect and create." Additional information and the registration link (admission is **\$125.00**) are available here: <https://nofanj.org/https-nofanj-org-event-calender-calendar-2/wc/>.

"Good Grain" Film Screening at Berkeley Oceanfront Hotel
1/31/2026, 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Asbury Park, NJ - In-person

"Join NOFA NJ [Northeast Organic Farming Association of NJ] and Hundred Year Films for a screening of Good Grain.... Learn more about the local grains movement and connect with the filmmaker and film subjects with audience Q&A. In 2024, NOFA NJ partnered with filmmaker Jared Flesher of Hundred Year Films to highlight the artisans behind the local grain movement in New Jersey. The resulting documentary, Good Grain, explores the opportunity and excitement that the local grain economy brings, and why it is important to shift away from our reliance on synthetic chemicals in the production of grain crops." Admission is **\$10 per person - free for NOFA NJ Winter Conference attendees** (see conference information [above](#)) . Light

refreshments and samples of local grain products will be served. The movie trailer is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL_AryvqD9Y. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/35pxfxje>.



**"9th Annual Watershed Conference" of
The Watershed Institute - Hybrid
2/26/2026, 9:00 a.m. - Virtual
& 2/27/2026, 9:00 a.m. - Virtual &
In-person - Ewing, NJ**

The 9th Annual Watershed conference is sponsored by The Watershed Institute; this year's theme is "All Hands on Deck - Multidisciplinary Approaches for Watershed Resilience." "The Watershed Conference is New Jersey's forum for municipal, county and state elected officials, staff, NGOs, environmental professionals and engaged community members to share and learn about best practices for watershed protection and restoration. Join us to learn: - How to reduce flooding and water pollution in your community; - Best practices for watershed planning and plan implementation; and - Effective strategies for engaging students and community members in watershed restoration." Links for additional information including the agenda, and to register (**Virtual attendance only = \$65.00; Hybrid - Virtual on 2/26 and in-person on 2/27 = \$130.00**), are available here: <https://thewatershed.org/eight-annual-watershed-conference/>

REPAIR CAFE

YOUR BROKEN ITEMS FIXED FOR FREE!

**Repair Cafes in NJ
Various Dates and Locations
- In-person**

The "Repair Cafe Garden State" website (available here: <https://www.repaircafegs.org>) states: "Why throw away broken items? A simple fix may make them good as new, and keep them from filling our landfills. Sustainability can be taught while building social bonds within our communities at every Repair Cafe event." **The website includes a calendar of most Repair Cafe events in NJ in the coming months.** Events taking place in January, with links for information, are shown below:

Jersey City, NJ Repair Cafe
1/11/2026, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
<https://www.repaircafegs.org/our-locations/jersey-city>

East Brunswick, NJ Repair Cafe
1/25/2026, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
<https://www.repaircafegs.org/our-locations/east-brunswick> - **with a great video about their Repair Cafe!**

Rutherford, NJ Repair Cafe
1/31/2026, 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
<https://www.repaircafegs.org/our-locations/rutherford>

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

**Eco-Logic Radio Show:
"Stop Funding Climate Chaos - Divestment Works"
- Recording of Radio Show**

The Eco-Logic radio/internet program on WBAI aired this recent show related to EJTF's goals (cohosted by **EJTF member Sally Gellert**), **Stop Funding Climate Chaos - Divestment Works**. "On this episode of Eco-Logic, we talk[ed] about shareholder activism, divestment, and why they're a good idea, and what you can do. Shareholder activism can move a company away from polluting and toward climate change solutions. Divestment attempts to remove resources from dirty fossil-fuel projects. We'll find out how the two strategies and

tactics can work together and when that has happened." The recording is available here: <https://wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=61771>. Note: The Eco-Logic radio show airs Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. on WBAI 99.5 FM, and can also be accessed on <https://wbai.org>.

UUFANJ Fall Issues Conference **"Meet the Moment" - Video of Conference**

The UU FaithAction NJ "Meet the Moment" Fall Issues Conference was held October 18, 2025. The keynote address was delivered by the Reverend Dr. Charles Boyer, a leading faith voice in New Jersey for racial justice issues. His advocacy has led to watershed statewide policy changes such as closure of youth prisons, voting rights restoration for the formerly incarcerated, community reinvestment through cannabis taxes, restricting solitary confinement, and lifesaving decarceration during the pandemic. The video of the conference is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZvqFKs13jw>; Reverend Dr. Charles Boyer's keynote address begins at minute 27:54.

"The Climate Crossroads: Why Haven't We Changed — and How We Do Now" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar was hosted by Elders Action Network, Elders Climate Action, and The Way Forward Regenerative Conversations Podcast. It featured "Bill McKibben, Dr. Rupert Read, and Brian McLaren, in a live conversation moderated by Dr. John Izzo, confronting the hard truth of where we stand and explor[ing] what it will take to move from paralysis to action." Note: "The Way Forward Regenerative Conversations Podcast" website (available here: <https://wayforwardpodcast.com>) includes links to a number of conversations that may be of interest. Each episode "dives deep into the heart of our planet's most pressing challenges and the transformative opportunities they present to us" focusing on *"What is the way forward?"* The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ox-nsBTqe-0>.

NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting **- Meeting Presentation Materials**

"The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is a free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn how

waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement not only help the environment, but also their bottom line." Some of the topics presented at this meeting were "Recycling and Waste Management Legislative Update," "The Good Guardians' SecondVerse Notebook Recovery/Waste Reduction Initiative," "New Jersey Clean Communities Single Use Plastics Update – with a focus on Skip the Stuff, Reusable Bag Resource Center and Anti-Litter messaging," "Saint Peter's University's Successful Waste Reduction, Recycling and Sustainability Initiatives," and "Introduction to Sustainable Fashion." Links to the agenda, a description of the presentations ("minutes") and to the presentations are available here, under "Waste Wise December 4 2025":

<https://anjr.site-ym.com/page/wastewise>.

"Planning with Intention" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar was sponsored by the American Forests' Tree Equity Coaching Network. "[In] the sixth session of the Tree Equity Coaching Network with Michael Martini from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative [SFI].... [we learned] about SFI's Urban and Community Forestry standards and how tree equity is foundational to all city planning." The Tree Equity Coaching Network "is a community of practice for urban foresters, community advocates, city leaders and allied professionals to connect, learn, inspire and cultivate city commitments to advance Tree Equity." The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5_LG_uRiXc.

"New Jersey Nature Based Solutions for a Changing Climate" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar was presented by the Rutgers - New Brunswick NJ Climate Change Resource Center. "Communities across New Jersey are turning to nature-based solutions (NBS) to address flooding, extreme heat, and other climate-related challenges. NBS use natural systems and processes to address environmental challenges while providing co-benefits for people and the environment. This webinar introduce[d] participants to key resources that can help planners, local officials, and conservation professionals learn about, plan for, and implement NBS. Participants explore[d] the opportunities and

challenges associated with incorporating NBS into local planning efforts. Attendees gain[ed] a deeper understanding of how to:

- Identify different types of nature-based solutions and determine which are most effective in various settings and environmental conditions.
- Design and maintain sustainable, ecologically based landscape projects that enhance resilience.
- Use online mapping and data visualization tools to inform decision-making."

The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4u60feRMOo>.

"Peace Building Through Multilateralism & Sustainable Development"

- Video of Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community (of which **EJTF member Sally Jane Gellert is a Board of Trustees Co-chair**), "UUs report[ed] back from the United Nation's COP 30 with International Convocation of UU Women's members Carmen Capriles and Cindy Piester." Carmen is a UU from Bolivia, an environmental advocate, agronomist and a COP negotiator. Cindy is an author-researcher-activist in her fourth year as an NGO delegate/observer or badged virtual attendee. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EIraQ3V-kKQ>.

"Where Key Clean Energy Tax Credits Stand" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI). It covered "the state of federal clean energy and energy efficiency tax credits. This briefing review[ed] how the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (P.L. 119-21) modified or altogether ended 12 key tax credits, including those for electric vehicles, renewables, biofuels, hydrogen, nuclear energy, and energy efficiency. The briefing share[d] ways companies and consumers are adapting to this new landscape, as well as the short- and long-term implications for the energy industry, developers, and manufacturers. Panelists also explore[d] the outlook for using federal tax policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower energy bills for households and businesses, and increase resilience to climate impacts while advancing U.S. competitiveness on the global stage." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgzMXvN3arQ&t=2s>.

NJBPU Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Meeting - Video of Webinar and Slides

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) monthly Clean Energy Program Energy Efficiency Stakeholder meeting for December 2025 included a Guest Presentation on "Modernizing New Jersey's Electric Grid." The video is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yvrpfrca>; the Guest Presentation begins at minute 00:07:22. Slides from the webinar are available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3arys45y>.

"Earth Day Every Day" Webinar Series - Videos of Webinars

This webinar series is a collaboration between the Rutgers Earth Day Every Day (E2D2) Extension program and the Marine Extension Program Seminar Series (MEPSS). This fall's webinar series was described as follows: "Protecting the environment of New Jersey is music to our ears! Experts hit the right notes on topics such as wetland ecology, light pollution, impacts on tree leaf color, and hurricane science. This series aims to raise awareness about some of the Garden State's environmental challenges and ways you can change your tune to help improve environmental quality." Videos of webinars of interest are available below:

- Blinded by the Light: Light Pollution - "Light pollution disrupts ecosystems, obscures the night sky, and harms human health. [We learned] how to reverse light pollution through responsible lighting practices and how to advocate for policies that reduce light pollution in New Jersey and beyond." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA0ma9cmqHg>;

- Rock You Like a Hurricane: Hurricane Science - "...[we learned] about the successes achieved by the Rutgers University Center for Ocean Observing Leadership (RUCOOL) to observe and understand the complex oceanography off New Jersey, and how results from their work have benefited fisheries science, weather and hurricane modeling, search and rescue, water quality monitoring, and so much more!" The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiXXMIArYPA>;

- Born on the Bayou: Wetlands in New Jersey

- "[We learned] about the basics of wetlands restoration, protection, and enhancement in New Jersey, with a focus on waterfowl conservation. Once the fundamentals [were] covered, we [heard] about the practical partnership work being done by Ducks Unlimited and the National Resources Conservation Service across the state to protect precious wetland habitat." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXG7bZ5FFYQ>.

24th Annual Joint Venture NJDEP/Air & Waste Management Association Regulatory Update Conference - Video of Conference

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) news release: "The 24th Annual Joint Venture NJDEP/Air & Waste Management Association Regulatory Update Virtual Conference.... provide[d] interested parties with an opportunity to learn about NJDEP regulatory initiatives and updates that concern environmental compliance and enforcement, contaminated site remediation and redevelopment, air quality, energy, materials sustainability, water quality, monitoring and standards, climate change mitigation and monitoring, environmental justice rules and guidance, sustainable waste management, research projects and emerging contaminants." The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbeb0VFnu_Q.

**NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES
[covering 11/26/2025 – 12/25/2025]**

**ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE
EMISSION REDUCTION**

Governor Murphy Announces Zero-Emission Vehicle Report to Accompany Strategic Investments

Gov. Murphy announced the release of the "New Jersey Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Roadmap" report (at-a-glance factsheet available here: https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20251217/5e/cd/b3/e9/92e195527aa26d3ad9cd54e0/NJ_Fact_Sheet.pdf

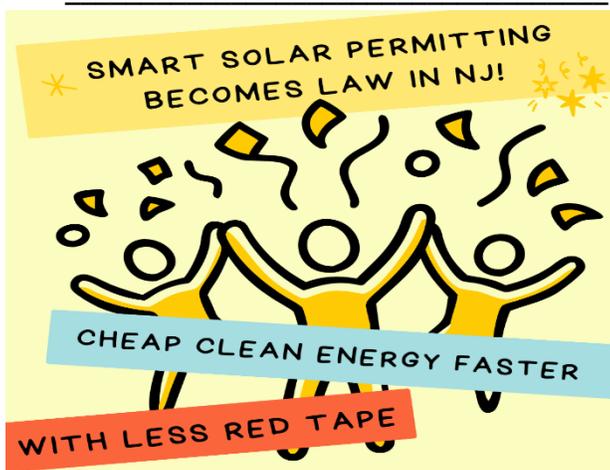
f; full report available here: <https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/docs/NJ-ZEV-Roadmap.pdf>). From the press release: "The report outlines the progress achieved, the challenges ahead, and strategies to encourage market transformation and accelerate the adoption of ZEVs.... [It] affirms the need to maintain and expand ZEV incentives, enhance ZEV infrastructure installation and reliability, invest in grid upgrades, develop ZEV resources and tools for targeted outreach, prioritize equity and underserved communities, develop a ZEV workforce, and reduce vehicle miles traveled. The roadmap also offers policy options to address various barriers to adoption, including a lack of charging infrastructure and consumer concerns about ZEV range, cost, and convenience." <https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251217c.shtml>

AG Platkin Files Lawsuit Against Trump Administration for Illegally Taking Away Funding for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

From the press release: "Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin today [12/16/2025] joined a coalition of 17 attorneys general in filing a lawsuit [available here: https://www.njoag.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-1216_Complaint.pdf] against the Trump Administration for unlawfully suspending two bipartisan grant programs for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.... Without any explanation or notice, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) has quietly refused to approve any new funding under two EV charging infrastructure programs created in the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA): the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Program (CFI) and the Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator (Accelerator) Program. In the lawsuit, New Jersey and the coalition allege that these unexplained actions violate the constitutional separation of powers, as the funding was approved by bipartisan majorities in Congress."

<https://www.njoag.gov/ag-platkin-files-lawsuit-against-trump-administration-for-illegally-taking-away-funding-for-electric-vehicle-charging-infrastructure/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES



Revised Smart Solar Permitting Bill To Cut Red Tape, Accelerate Installations, & Deliver Affordable Electricity Passes Legislature [& Gov. Murphy SIGNED!]

This is a great success story for a **coalition of which UUFANJ is a member**. This bill (A5264) expedites the review and approval of projects to install most types of residential solar energy systems. It requires the Commissioner of Community Affairs to establish and administer the "State Smart Solar Permitting Platform." This will be an online automated platform to fast-track permits for rooftop solar and home batteries. As described by NJ Shines, the impact will be: Faster permits = quicker installation; Lower red tape = reduced costs; Simpler process = accessible to more families; and More solar = cleaner future for all.

<https://www.njshines.org/2025/12/18/revised-smart-solar-permitting-bill-to-cut-red-tape-accelerate-installations-deliver-affordable-electricity-passes-legislature/>

Federal Judge Strikes Down Trump Ban on Offshore Wind Development

This article, with 1-1/2-minute news video, describes the favorable ruling by a U.S. Court judge in Massachusetts on the lawsuit brought by a coalition of NJ and 16 other states related to the President's executive order to cancel all wind projects on land and water. The judge ruled that the order was arbitrary and capricious and violated the Administrative Procedures Act (APA). The administration could appeal the ruling. While the ruling is viewed as a victory for clean energy advocates, as it overturns the administration's moratorium on approval of wind development

projects, the ruling does not compel the administration to approve the projects - **on 12/22/2025, the administration paused offshore wind leases** - see <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/trump-administration-protects-us-national-security-pausing-offshore-wind-leases> - **"due to security risks" that were not identified.** <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/federal-judge-strikes-down-trump-ban-on-offshore-wind-development/>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

NJEDA Board Approves Second Round of FEED NJ Grants, Providing \$9.3M to 23 Organizations

From the press release: "The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) Board approved more than \$9.3 million in grant awards to 23 organizations under the Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey (FEED NJ) Pilot Program. The approvals mark the second round of awards under the \$30 million program and will expand the NJEDA's support for food security projects in New Jersey's 14 most acute Food Desert Communities (FDCs), catalyzing innovative, sustainable, and scalable food access initiatives in underserved areas. The first round of 50 approvals totaling \$20.6 million was made during the NJEDA's November board meeting. The total funding of \$30 million to 73 organizations [list and project descriptions available here: <https://www.njeda.gov/feed-nj-awardees/>] is one of the largest investments in recent years dedicated to strengthening New Jersey's food security infrastructure."

<https://www.njeda.gov/njeda-board-approves-second-round-of-feed-nj-grants-providing-9-3m-to-23-organizations/>

Land Preservation Project Is a Win for Conservation and Clean Energy

The Six Flags Great Adventure amusement park in Jackson Township had planned to build a solar field adjacent to the park, clearing 18,000 trees in a forest at the northern edge of the Pinelands National Reserve. A coalition (led by New Jersey Conservation Foundation and Save Barnegat Bay,

and which also included Environment New Jersey, Clean Water Action, the New Jersey Sierra Club, and The Crosswicks–Doctors Creek Watershed Association) intervened and ultimately secured landmark conservation easements that now protect 257 forested acres owned by the park from being developed, including wetlands at the headwaters of the Toms River. The solar field will be relocated to an existing parking lot and a much smaller, less important area of the park.

https://www.njconservation.org/press_release/land-preservation-project-is-a-win-for-conservation-and-clean-energy/

Local Government and Environmental Groups Move Toward Preserving Land in Black Run Watershed in the Pinelands

The headwaters of the Black Run Creek in Evesham Township, which are among the most pristine reaches of the Pinelands National Reserve and which are the key to keeping the Black Run Preserve ecologically intact, have been under threat for more than a decade, most recently from developers who had plans to bulldoze around 800 acres of privately owned land in the Black Run headwaters and build up to 270 new homes. A nationwide outcry, spearheaded by the NJ Climate Revolution Action Network, has helped to result in Evesham Township passing a resolution in favor of designating the land as "forest area," and the New Jersey Pinelands Commission and the Burlington County Commissioners have both agreed to help allocate funding toward purchasing this land, providing \$3 million and \$5 million, respectively. Additional actions are needed in order to preserve the land, but if they succeed and this portion is added to the Black Run Preserve as planned, it would result in a pristine 2,135 acres with trails for hiking. See

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/12/local-government-and-environmental-groups-move-toward-preserving-land-in-black-run-watershed-in-the-pinelands/>

The Pinelands Alliance website includes a detailed description of this issue (available here: <https://pinelandsalliance.org/a-message-to-our-members-and-followers-a-breakthrough-year-for-the-black-run-headwaters-thanks-to-you/>) and notes that "A purchase agreement has not yet been finalized, and Evesham Township must complete its adoption of protective zoning to ensure the land remains shielded from development. Continued public engagement will be key."

Regenerative Farming ("Unpacking with CivicStory")

This article takes a deep dive into Regenerative Farming, and covers the following topics: What is Regenerative Farming?; Why is Soil Health Important?; The Problem; Solutions #1, #2, and #3; Why Now?; and Local Solutions to a Global Problem.

<https://www.civicstory.org/civicstory-blog/2025/12/16/unpacking-with-civicstory-regenerative-farming>

CLIMATE CHANGE

Final Push on to Pass NJ's 100% Clean Energy Law

In this 7-1/2-minute news video interview, NJ Sierra Club Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot describes support for the "Clean Energy Act" bill (S237/A1480) that would require NJ to get 100% of its electricity from clean sources including solar, wind (and nuclear) by 2035. She emphasizes that, besides reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating new jobs, clean energy sources would help to keep utility bills low in the long-term.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/12/final-push-on-to-pass-njs-100-clean-energy-law/>

DEP Awards Nearly \$11 Million for Carbon Sequestration Projects Through Its Natural Climate Solutions Grant Program

From the news release: "The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today [12/19/2025] announced the award of nearly \$11 million in Natural Climate Solutions grants for three projects that will help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by restoring coastal marshland and expanding urban tree canopy. The projects are located in Stone Harbor, Stafford and Montclair.... In January 2023, DEP awarded \$24.3 million for 14 projects through the first round of the grant program. Together with the ongoing second round of funding, the Murphy Administration has dedicated \$54.3 million to this grant program.

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/25_0057/



Governor Murphy, New Jersey Turnpike Authority Board Chair O'Connor Announce Changes to the Newark Bay-Hudson County Extension Improvements Program

From the press release: "Governor Murphy and New Jersey Turnpike Authority Board Chair O'Connor today [12/19/2025] announced that the Newark Bay-Hudson County Extension Improvements Program will be revised to eliminate new travel lanes east of Interchange 14A and provide a direct connection from the Turnpike Extension to port facilities in Bayonne and Jersey City. The changes to the projects are anticipated to save approximately \$500 million in total costs to the program." This would eliminate the most controversial part of the plan, but EmpowerNJ and others call it "a P.R. stunt, not a compromise" (see the article below).

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251219f.shtml>

Statement on the NJTA Turnpike Extension Announcement from EmpowerNJ, Turnpike Trap, and Hudson County Complete Streets Coalitions

From the Statement: "We would be the first to cheer a true victory stopping the widening of the Turnpike Extension – but Friday night's announcement [see the article above] does not fundamentally alter the project, will potentially make traffic worse, and raises more questions than answers. Gov. Murphy's correct decision not to add travel lanes east of Exit 14A immediately begs the question of why there will be a doubling of travel lanes west of 14A and a continuation of the plan to expand and double the capacity of the Newark Bay Bridge.... Four lanes of east-bound bridge traffic will now perpetually merge into two lanes at Exit 14A causing monumental and continual traffic jams, leading to the very thing

NJTA is supposedly working to reduce – traffic congestion. This increased traffic on the expanded Bridge will cause even more cars to cut through local Jersey City streets to reach the Holland Tunnel, leading to worse air quality and traffic in Jersey City. The announcement is also murky about what the NJTA plans to do east of the Bridge.... And nothing says NJTA couldn't revisit lane expansion in Jersey City after the Newark Bay Bridge is doubled in size. There would be pressure to do this because of the bottleneck that NJTA will be creating eastbound after the Bridge.... We urge Gov.-elect Sherrill to direct the NJ Turnpike Authority to look at this project with new eyes and through the lens of affordability, transit needs, and a new analysis – and not rubberstamp an expansion project that now makes even less sense."

<https://turnpiketrap.org/coalition-statement-on-the-njta-turnpike-extension-announcement>

DRINKING WATER (other than lead)

Governor Murphy Leads Multi-State Petition to Request Nationwide Monitoring of Microplastics in Drinking Water

From the press release: "Governor Phil Murphy today [11/26/2025] led a coalition of seven states to sign a petition [available here:

https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20251126/24/85/ad/24/77a93608fa1b601e94b31756/Microplastics_Petition.pdf] to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requesting nationwide monitoring of drinking water supplies for microplastics, with the goal of better understanding the occurrence of contamination in drinking water supplies. Joining Governor Murphy in signing the petition were Delaware Governor Matt Meyer, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker, Maryland Governor Wes Moore, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont. The petition to Administrator Lee Zeldin requests that the EPA include microplastics in the 2027 renewal of the agency's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 6 (UCMR-6). Including a new contaminant in the UCMR – in this case, microplastics – is often the first important step in determining whether a drinking water standard is warranted."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251126c.shtml>

ENERGY/ENERGY EFFICIENCY

See: "PJM-related Issues" box on [p. 15](#)

New Jersey's New Energy Plan Depends on Challenging Goals

This article looks at the impact of "federal headwinds," AI data centers, and other issues on NJ's climate strategy goals of reliable, affordable and clean power as outlined in its Energy Master Plan.

<https://sjclimate.news/7056/county/atlantic-county/new-jersey-has-a-new-map-for-its-energy-future-but-it-means-delivering-on-difficult-goals/>

OTHER

Murphy Administration Announces Adoption of State Development and Redevelopment Plan

From the press release: "... for the first time since 2001, the State Planning Commission formally adopted a new State Development and Redevelopment Plan at its December 17, 2025 meeting. The State Development and Redevelopment Plan, developed through collaboration across all levels of government, serves as a guide to inform the public and encourage State agencies, counties, and municipalities to align their land use policies with its vision. It aims to promote a balanced and inclusive strategy for managing and guiding growth across New Jersey, centered on ten key land-use priorities."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251219e.shtml>

Rutgers CAIT Awarded \$13M by NJEDA to Pilot Test Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Trucks

From the press release: "The Rutgers University Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT) in the School of Engineering is preparing to deploy and demonstrate hydrogen fuel cell technology as part of an innovative pilot project funded by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA). Joined by project

partners Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG), the Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE), Hyundai Motor Company, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Rutgers CAIT will lead this initiative that has the potential to enhance supply chain efficiency, invest in American infrastructure and jobs, and position New Jersey as a hub for advanced transportation technologies."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251209b.shtml>

Inside the Pinelands Commission's Latest Deep Dive on Synthetic Turf

This piece by Dr. Heidi Yeh, Policy Director of the Pinelands Alliance (new name for the Pinelands Preservation Alliance) summarizes in-depth presentations given to the Alliance by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)'s Green Acres Program and the Division of Science and Research on "synthetic turf" (DEP's name for artificial turf). Links to the video of the presentations, including "a very engaged" Q&A/public comment session, are included in the article.

<https://pinelandsalliance.org/policy-notes-december-2025/>

Advocates Rally to Oppose Dangerous 'NJ DOGE' Bill

From the NJ Sierra Club news release: "A coalition of advocates rallied at the Statehouse today [12/18/2025] to demand that the Legislature reject a dangerous bill that would implement New Jersey's version of DOGE, putting the health and safety of New Jersey families [at risk] while enriching billionaire corporate interests. S4373 would gut New Jersey Administrative Procedures Act [APA], which lays out the process by which agencies across state government implement new laws by publicizing regulations designed to protect New Jersey families. The APA ensures that experienced, nonpartisan career professionals develop and implement regulations that carry out laws passed by the Legislature, including protections related to health and safety, consumer rights, education, and the environment. Instead, S4373 would create layers of new red tape designed to delay or block the implementation of duly enacted laws, while opening the door to sweeping deregulation. The bill would also shift authority away from career experts and toward

political appointees, putting New Jersey families at risk." See

<https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2025/12/advocates-rally-oppose-dangerous-nj-doge-bill>.

Jeff Tittel, former director of the NJ Sierra Club, dissects the bill, which he says is "an assault on the environment," here:

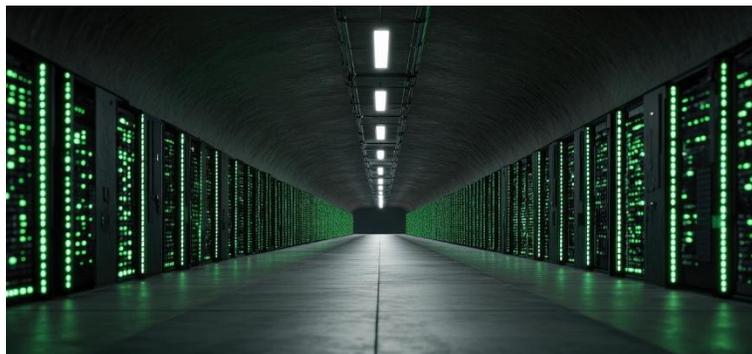
<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/senate-democrats-join-trumps-war-on-the-environment-with-s4373-corporate-polluters-take-over-njdep-act/>.

Opinion: AI Data Centers Are Booming in New Jersey, While Oversight Lags

This piece is by Greta Jennings, a Cornell University student majoring in Economics and Environment & Sustainability, who currently interns at the consulting start-up SeaBridge Sustainability where she focuses on data centers

and sustainable finance. She lays out the background and impacts of AI data centers' growth in NJ, and also details the effects of Gov. Murphy's recent conditional veto of a bill (S-4293) that would have resulted in more transparency about energy usage from the data centers.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/12/op-ed-ai-data-centers-are-booming-in-new-jersey-while-oversight-lags/>



PJM-related Issues

PJM Interconnection LLC (PJM) operates the electric transmission grid serving NJ.

Regional Power Grid Faces Energy Shortage as Demand Soars

This article describes the additional NJ electric customer rate increases in 2027 that will result from the latest PJM auction, and also the fact that for the first time PJM failed to procure enough supply to meet demand, partially driven by the increase in AI data centers.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/regional-power-grid-faces-energy-shortage-as-demand-soars/>

Governor Murphy Joins Group of Bipartisan Governors to Request Price Cap Extension to Keep Utility Costs From Rising Amid Regional Cost Crisis

From the press release: "Governor Phil Murphy joined a bipartisan group of Governors... to pen a letter (available here: <https://nj.gov/governor/docs/20251203-PJM-Board-CIFP-Letter.pdf>)... to PJM... calling on the grid operator to take decisive action to avoid significant price increases for customers and to ensure the grid remains reliable..."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251205c.shtml>

PJM Stakeholders Fail to Agree on Data Center Interconnection Rules

In an 11/2025 meeting, the PJM Members Committee rejected all 12 stakeholder proposals on how to address large load additions to the grid.

<https://www.utilitydive.com/news/pjm-stakeholders-data-center-interconnection-cifp/806009/>

FERC Orders PJM to Craft Large Load Co-location Rules

"Co-location loads" are customer loads located next to existing power generating facilities. FERC found PJM's existing Tariffs related to these situations to be "unjust and unreasonable."

<https://www.utilitydive.com/news/ferc-pjm-colocation-data-center/808368/>

FERC Commissioner Rosner's Concurrence on PJM Co-Location

This provides an explanation (with diagrams) of the FERC decision described in the article above.

<https://www.ferc.gov/news-events/news/e-1-commissioner-rosners-concurrence-pjm-co-location>

MORATORIUM MONDAYS CONTINUE

Please continue to contact Gov. Murphy every Monday and urge him to declare a climate emergency moratorium on fossil fuel projects! These efforts have been successful in that a number of projects have been stopped or delayed in the past. Either call through the EmpowerNJ number (866-586-4069) to get coaching on the topic of the week, emphasizing what is in the news, or call directly to the governor's office (609-292-6000). Over 50 environmental, citizen, faith, and progressive groups in NJ are calling on Governor Murphy to enact a moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects in NJ until there are rules in place to achieve 100% clean energy goals.

UU FaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force -

Visit <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/> for links and resources, and to join the EJTF
